

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY
INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG PRIORITY
AMCONSUL NAHA PRIORITY
USLO PEKING PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY SEOUL PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY TAIPEI PRIORITY
CINCPAC HONOLULU HAWAII PRIORITY 0148

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 101664

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PBOR, MARR, CH, JA

SUBJECT: SENKAKUS

REF: (A) STATE 96877; (B) TOKYO 6549; (C) STATE 97541

1. POL COUNSELOR ARIMA CALLED ON COUNTRY DIRECTOR PLATT
4/17 TO DISCUSS SENKAKUS PRESS GUIDANCE (PARA ONE REFTEL A)
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AND BASIC US POSITION ON SENKAKUS DISPUTE (PARA 2 REFTEL A).
REGARDING GUIDANCE, ARIMA ASKED IF USG COULD AGREE TO
DELETE WORD "CURRENT" FROM FIRST SENTENCE OF PRESS GUIDAN-
CE. RE BASIC USG POSITION, ARIMA PROVIDED BACKGROUND DE-
TAILS, CONCLUDING THAT GOJ HAD ACQUIESCED TO USG IN 1971
BUT HAD NOT BEEN FULLY CONSULTED. ARIMA REITERATED THAT
GOJ WAS TROUBLED BY SOME OF WORDING OF BASIC POSITION AND

EXPRESSED VIEW THAT REITERATION OF USG POSITION AS NOW SET FORTH PARTICULARLY AT TIME OF PM FUKUDA'S VISIT MIGHT CAUSE GOJ EMBARRASSMENT. ARIMA REITERATED GOJ REQUEST INITIALLY MADE BY TAMBA FOR CHANGES IN WORDING OF BASIC POSITION (PARA 2 REFTEL B) AS WELL AS FOR DELETION OF "CURRENT" FROM PRESS GUIDANCE.

2. PLATT RESPONDED THAT BASIC USG POSITION HAD BEEN FORMULATED WITH FULL REGARD FOR LONG-TERM US NEEDS AND THAT IT CONTINUED TO MEET THOSE NEEDS NOW AS IT HAD IN 1971.

WHILE WE WOULD ATTEMPT TO ADJUST PRESS GUIDANCE RE US BOMBING RANGES IN SENKAKUS TO MEET PRESENT SITUATION, INCLUDING CONSIDERATION OF DELETION OF WORD "CURRENT", CHANGING BASIC USG POSITION ON SENKAKUS TERRITORIAL DISPUTE WOULD BE MAJOR EXERCISE INVOLVING POLICY REVIEW AT HIGHEST LEVEL. HE ADDED HIS PERSONAL VIEW THAT, SINCE OBJECTIVE SITUATION HAD NOT CHANGED SINCE 1971, HE COULD NOT BE SANGUINE ABOUT THE OUTCOME OF ANY SUCH REVIEW. TO BEGIN SUCH A REVIEW, HE NOTED, WE WOULD NEED TO HAVE GOJ PRESENT ITS POSITION IN DETAIL AND DEVELOP SUPPORTING ARGUMENTATION FOR CONSIDERATION. ARIMA RESPONDED THAT HE WOULD CHECK WITH HIS GOVERNMENT FOR INSTRUCTIONS.

3. PLATT SAID THAT USG FULLY UNDERSTOOD DELICACY OF CONFIDENTIAL

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SENKAKUS ISSUE FOR JAPAN, AND THEREFORE WISHED TO AVOID TO THE EXTENT POSSIBLE PUBLIC REITERATION OF USG BASIC POSITION AT THIS TIME.

4. ARIMA ADMITTED THAT MOFA WAS AWARE AT TIME OF REVERSION NEGOTIATIONS THAT USG DID NOT WISH TO BECOME INVOLVED IN ANY SENKAKUS DISPUTE AND THEREFORE IT DID NOT RAISE ANY OBJECTION TO USG POSITION WHICH, HE RECALLED, HAD BEEN COMMUNICATED TO GOJ ONLY ONE DAY BEFORE JUNE 17, 1971 SIGNING OF REVERSION AGREEMENT. HE ADDED THAT THE JAPANESE WOULD VIEW WITH ALARM AN UNRESPONSIVE US ATTITUDE IN THE FACE OF SOME CLEARLY AGGRESSIVE ACT BY THE PRC IN THE SENKAKUS. IN HIS PERSONAL OPINION, HE ADDED, SUCH A DEVELOPMENT COULD CALL INTO QUESTION THE US-JAPAN MUTUAL SECURITY TREATY. PLATT POINTED OUT THAT SINCE MUTUAL SECURITY TREATY NOT QUESTIONED IN 1971, WHEN POSITION ORIGINALLY FORMULATED AND PUBLISHED THERE SEEMED NO REASON WHY TREATY SHOULD BE QUESTIONED NOW.

5. FOR TOKYO: YOU MAY REVISE PRESS GUIDANCE (PARA 1 REFTEL A) SO THAT IT READS "THE LONG STANDING US FORCES' UTILIZATION OF TWO BOMBING RANGES IN THE SENKAKU ISLANDS

HAS GROWN OUT OF THE PERIOD OF US ADMINISTRATION OF THESE ISLANDS AND FROM THE FACT OF JAPAN'S EXERCISE OF AUTHORITY OVER THEM. THE US USES THESE FACILITIES IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE MUTUAL SECURITY TREATY AND ITS RELATED ARRANGEMENTS." YOU SHOULD EMPHASIZE TO MOFA HOWEVER THAT BASIC USG POSITION (PARA 2 REFTEL A) REMAINS UNCHANGED. REMAINDER OF GUIDANCE SET FORTH PARA 5 IN STATE 97541 REMAINS IN EFFECT. CHRISTOPHER

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